

Weston Weekly Leader

E. A. BAKER Editor and Man. Agr.

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A SUMMER'S OUTING IN THE CŒUR D'ALENES. The Adventures of Two Prospectors and Three Jackasses in North-eastern Washington and British Columbia in Search of Gold and Health.

From a Diary kept by George Eidenour, and Edited by an old Correspondent of the Leader. (Continued from last week.) From "Thousand acre lake" we descended the long hill to the Methow river.

We begin to experience that fever of expectancy that comes over the prospector when he finds himself in a locality containing evidences of the existence of precious metals.

My excellent partner although a first rate hunter, cared but little for that class of sport except as a means to supply our larder, but he was passionately fond of fishing, and during our long journey through this angle's, as well as hunter's paradise, never missed an opportunity to cast a line in the brooks and rivers that we passed.

I am somewhat imbued with socialistic ideas, and frequently found myself contemplating this as a most favored spot for the establishment of a community upon some ideal plan, that would demonstrate the possibility of humanity existing without murder, rapine, and a million other forms of cruelty being considered necessary and unavoidable concomitants of civilization.

There are thousands such among the striving mass of humanity. Men who are all their lifetime subject to the thralling bondage of poverty, through weaknesses superinduced by the noblest traits of character incident to human nature.

But like those who oppose my opinions upon these subjects, I sometimes fear that such plans for the eradication of evil from the world, are futile, and no barrier raised by nature, will protect poor weak mortality from the weas produced by it.

pass through such a locality, we wonder that it is possible. How any sane, reasonable person can thus isolate himself from the rest of humanity, and live contentedly so, is strange indeed to us. And yet there are more than a hundred excellent people, both sane and reasonable, who inhabit this beautiful valley, many of them consisting of women and children, who have no ingress or egress from its mountain-locked recesses, except by the narrow and difficult trail over which we had just passed.

I will not soon forget one of the Methow homes we passed some weeks subsequent to the time of which I am now writing. We had been on one of our mountain jaunts, and descending into the valley of the Methow at a point farup the stream, we came to a settler's cabin that stood near the trail.

As soon as we drove up to the house a young and pretty woman, with two small children hanging to her skirts, came to the door, and stood listening with long pent-up feminine curiosity, to the conversation between her husband and ourselves.

Observing a point in the river that appeared shallow enough to allow us to cross, we struck camp and spent the evening in futile attempts to fell a log from bank to bank, in order that we might carry over our outfit, as we feared the risk of leaving it packed on our animals.

Satisfied with our effort, we encamped upon the bank of the river opposite our former camp, and after we had broken our fast on a slight meal consisting of some twenty or more fried trout, with side dishes of boiled potatoes etc., I took my gun and climbing the mountain for a short distance, found from the abundant "sign," that we had at last arrived in the game country we had heard so much about.

I had not gone a half mile from camp when a band of black-tail deer jumped from a small clump of fir trees a few rods from where I stood, and bounding across a little canyon, stopped and gazed back at me.

While returning to camp for old Jim to carry my meat in, I saw twenty or more deer, and could have loaded the train had I desired, but one deer was sufficient for our necessities, and to have slain more would have been murder.

I presume there was not an hour during the several days that we were traveling along the banks of the Twit river that I could not have shot a deer had it been necessary. They bounded away upon every side, and would frequently step while still in gushet, and gaze in wonderment at our little cavalcade. Verily this is a paradise of hunters.

Becoming discouraged at the slight prospects found thus far, we concluded to push our way into the lefty range near the source of the Methow. The weather was delightful and as was our custom, we traveled by easy stages, camping wherever we found a convenient spot, or more generally, whenever the pangs of hunger visited us which occurred at about intervals now.

We had now reached a point about sixty or seventy miles from the mouth of the Twit. We made our last camp on this river, concluding to remain until we made arrangements for what we knew would be a long and tedious march, and began the preparations by killing a fat deer, and jerking the fleshy portions of the carcass into the high altitude through which we would be obliged to travel, would lead us out for the range of game.

The process of jerking meat is simple and generally known; but for fear some tenderfoot may read this and not understand the medium operandi, I will explain that the flesh is cut into thin strips, and after being lightly salted, is strung upon small sticks and suspended over a heap of coals. By this means it is partly cooked and thoroughly dried, preserving it for any length of time desired. If there is any food more palatable to a hungry prospector than jerked venison, I have it yet to find.

The evening before our departure from this camp, Bill concluded to make a survey of our probable route, and left camp for that purpose. Returning after a few hours, he informed me that he had made a strange and startling discovery a short distance up the river.

He had been pushing his way through the thick underbrush, and coming out in an open spot near the river bank, he saw evidences to convince him that white men had been there before him. Some trees had been felled in the grove, and going nearer, he discovered the foundation of a house, several legs having been laid up. We returned together to more fully investigate this mysterious find.

Besides the discoveries made by my partner, we found a platform for whipsawing lumber, a log lying upon it with a plank partly sawed, wooden handspikes standing about as if they had just been abandoned, and near the cabin was a rude table set for six men, a kettle suspended over where a fire had been kindled, and other evidences to convince us that a party of men had been at this spot some five or six years previous, making preparations for mining, and had finally abandoned the project, probably frightened away by Indians; or perhaps their skeletons even now lay scattered in the near vicinity of their former camp. No doubt old Moses or some of his braves could clear up the mystery.

(To be continued.) In discussion of the labor question there appears to be a good deal of misconception as to the relative importance of the various pursuits and occupations in which the American people are engaged.

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